Power and Violence in Central America and Mexico  
Anthropology 696B-1  
Prof. Linda Green  
Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:45pm

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This course examines recent approaches to politics, culture, and power in Central American and Southern Mexico from the perspective of sociocultural anthropology and history. At the topical level the seminar explores the lives of laboring peoples and the multiplicity of forces that have shaped their lives from the late 19th century to the end of the 20th century. Theoretically, the seminar considers different understandings of such concepts as hegemony, social fields, popular culture, and subalternity, exploring their possible relevance and connections for work on violence, state formations, and resistance in the lives and practices of ordinary people.

Each week a central text (initially, journal articles) is assigned. Students are expected to read each week's assignment and write a short response paper, approximately 2 pages, DUE IN LAST CLASS OF THE WEEK. These response papers should take the form of outlining key concepts and issues raised by the readings and forming questions, critiques/areas for discussion. The assigned texts, along with your response papers, will provide the basis for each week's discussion. Everyone is expected to come to class prepared to participate in the discussion. Additionally, each student is expected to lead a formal presentation of a set of readings. Lastly, a research paper on a topic of interest to you and related to the seminar of 15 pages in length is due on the last day of class.

All work is due when stated and extensions will be given only in extraordinary circumstances. No incompletes will be given.

Grading
Grades will be based on the following criteria: 25% class participation; 25% discussion presentation; 25% response papers (there are 12 weeks of reading assignments - only 10 of the 12 response papers will be used for your grade); 25% research paper.

Books are available for purchase at the Campus bookstore. Additionally, all books are available on reserve at the Main Library. Journal articles are available to photocopy.

August 27 and 29
Introduction

I. Theoretical Orientations

September 3 and 5 (on hegemony) - power - state  
Raymond Williams 1977 Marxism and Literature parts 1&2

Antonio Gramsci, 1971 Selections from Prison Notebooks, State and Civil Society and Notes on Italian History

September 10 and 12 (social fields) culture
Smith, Gavin 1999 Confronting the Present Oxford: Berg


September 17 and 19 (subaltern) history


Latin American Subaltern Studies Group 1993 "Founding Statement," Boundary 2 20(3) 110-121

September 24 and 26 (rapprochement of history and anthropology)


II. Nicaragua

October 1 and 3

October 8 and 10


III. El Salvador

October 115 and 17
Aldo Lauria-Santiago 1999 An Agrarian Republic U of Pittsburgh Press

October 22 and 24  

IV. Guatemala

October 29 and 31  
David McCreery 1994 Rural Guatemala 1760-1940 Stanford University Press

November 3 and 5  
Linda Green 1999 Fear as a Way of Life Columbia University Press

Plus Guest speaker from Guatemala

V. Chiapas

November 12 and 14  

November 19 and 21  
No Class AAA meetings New Orleans

November 26 and 28  
No Class Thanksgiving break

December 3 and 5  
Conclusion - Research papers due without

December 10  
Last Class - wrap up